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**JACK ANDERSON and JOSEPH SPEAR**

## Khomeini Country in the Bekaa Valley

**O**ur associate Barbara Newman has just returned from the terrorist stronghold of Baalbek, deep in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. *DLE* Intelligence experts describe Baalbek starkly as the most dangerous city on Earth. She calls it the "suburbs of hell."

Newman is perhaps the first Western reporter to venture into this forbidden valley since Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini sent a detachment of his revolutionary guards to eastern Lebanon in 1979. They recruited and trained fanatical Shiite Moslems as terrorists. Today an invisible terrorist army, sworn to die for Khomeini, holds the valley in its grip and the populace in dread.

Our associate was escorted by Lebanese bodyguards and Syrian commandos. They drove at top speeds through terrorist territory, with automatic weapons bristling out of car windows. At the town limits of Baalbek, they refused to enter. Instead, they hid their cars and led Newman to a ridge overlooking the town.

She ducked into a pit, out of sight, where she was allowed five minutes to photograph the terrorist stronghold. She asked a bodyguard to take some pictures, but his hands trembled so violently that he couldn't focus the camera. "I can't believe I'm in Baalbek," he said.

Newman's escorts pointed out the terrorist headquarters, a former Lebanese army outpost still called the Sheik Abdullah barracks, on the opposite hillside. The terrorists reportedly hold most of their hostages there in barren basement rooms. All Newman could do was observe the terrorist compound through field glasses.

She arranged for a Shiite surrogate, a woman who would be safe there, to go into Baalbek in our behalf and speak to the terrorist operations chief, a 44-year-old former schoolteacher named Hussein Musawi. He laughed when he was told Newman was afraid to enter his lair. He sent back a statement that the terrorists would retaliate against Americans because of their intervention in the Persian Gulf, that all Jews are Israelis and "should be stamped on like microbes," that Western hostility toward Islam had made it necessary to "kidnap and hurt" innocent hostages.

Syrian soldiers staff the checkpoints in the Bekaa Valley, and the villages are populated with Lebanese. Yet this is Khomeini country. His scowling image glares constantly from wall posters, wall murals and tall roadside signs.

The road to Baalbek is emblazoned with Khomeini's inflammatory words. One mural shows a fist smashing through a U.S. flag. Another calls for the elimination of Israel.

Khomeini's call to revolution also wails forth from tinny loudspeakers strung high on village mosques. And his flags flutter in the drifting breezes—Islamic flags, revolutionary flags, terrorist flags. The people on the road to Baalbek sulk in their walled enclaves, staring sullenly at outsiders who dare to invade their private corner of hell. The mullahs' wailing echoes through the streets; their amplified chants have a chilling effect.

Newman's military caravan sped through lush fields of wheat and hemp, used to make hashish. Then there it was: Baalbek, rising out of the hemp fields and slumping quickly back into them.